



QUESTIONS FOR CONNECTICUT COMMUTER RAIL COUNCIL NOMINEE

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CONNECTICUT COMMUTER RAIL COUNCIL (CGS §§ 13B-212B, 13B-212C)

The council studies and investigates all aspects of the daily operation of commuter lines in the state, monitors their performance, and recommends changes to improve their efficiency and quality of service. The council may request, and receive from any department, agency, or political subdivision of the state, any assistance and data it requests to properly carry out its duties.

It must work with the Department of Transportation (DOT) to advocate for commuter line customers and recommend ways to improve the lines. The council must annually report its findings and recommendations to the governor, legislature, DOT commissioner, Connecticut Public Transportation Commission, New York Metro North Rail Commuter Council, and Management Advisory Board and Office of the Inspector General of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) in New York.

NOMINEE QUESTIONS

1. Metro North recently changed leadership after a rough few years. Joseph Giulietti has been president for about two years now. How has Metro North changed under his leadership? How do you think he could further improve the rail service, and how can the council help him to do so?
2. MTA and Metro North have said they will take steps to restore commuter confidence, including holding frequent meetings with commuters. How effective do you think their efforts have been in restoring confidence? What other steps do they need to take to restore trust in Metro North?
3. Metro North had a difficult 2013 and 2014, with fatal accidents, power failures, and stranded commuters. Recent reviews by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) cited significant concerns about an "ineffective safety department and lack of a safety culture" and "an overemphasis of on-time performance." The reports recommended several improvements, including adopting new

technology and operational procedures. Are you satisfied with the response to the accidents? What role, if any, should the council play in ensuring that Metro North complies with the recommendations?

4. When Joseph Giulietti took over Metro North, he testified to legislators that improving safety was his number one priority, but that it may come at the cost of slower rail times because of reduced speeds and additional time needed between trips. He stated that he planned to spread out the schedules to allow the rail line to operate both safely and on-time. How have the new schedules affected commuters? How can the council help ensure that Metro North finds the right balance between safe operations and quick commute times?
5. Besides the complaints about the recent series of Metro North accidents, commuters have complained that the new M-8 cars have had mechanical troubles, and that trains are dirty, overcrowded, and running behind schedule. How can the council ensure that Metro North addresses these concerns?
6. Connecticut's contractual arrangement with Metro North apparently leaves the state with few options for redress. Several legislators have said the state should consider seeking another entity to operate the rail service. Do you support such an idea? Why or why not? Short of seeking another operator, what steps could the state take to ensure Metro North is held accountable?
7. Metro North is a subsidiary of the MTA, a New York authority. Connecticut does not have a representative on the MTA board. Should it have one? Are there other ways to influence the operation of Metro North? If so, what are they?
8. Do you favor a deadline by which Metro North must prove it is committed to improving service and winning back customer confidence? How much time should it have to do so?
9. What types of transit-oriented development near existing and new rail stations do you think would attract new riders and have the greatest benefit for current riders? What can the council do to encourage these developments?
10. What issues may be hampering the development of better service on branch lines, in particular the Danbury and Waterbury branches? Should the Danbury line be extended to New Milford?

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